



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/981,343	10/15/2001	J Eric Mowat	5693P005	5512
48102 7590 04/28/2008 NETWORK APPLIANCE/BLAKELY 1279 OAKMEAD PARKWAY SUNNYVALE, CA 94085-4040				
EXAMINER				
BILGRAMI, ASGHAR H				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2143				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
04/28/2008		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

09/981,343

**Applicant(s)**

MOWAT, J ERIC

**Examiner**

ASGHAR BILGRAMI

**Art Unit**

2143

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/24/2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 8-19, 21-37, 39-49, 51, 52, 57 and 58 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 8-19, 21-37, 39-49, 51, 52, 57 and 58 is/are rejected.

- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
5) ☐ ~~Notes of Informal Patent Application~~  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/24/2008 has been entered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-4, 6, 8-19, 21-37, 39-49, 51, 52, 57 and 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over O'Rourke et al (U.S. 6,986,018 B2) and Guenther et al (6,134,588).

4. Claims 1-4, 6, 8-19, 21-37, 39-49, 51, 52, 57 and 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by O'Rourke et al (U.S. 6,986,018 B2)

5. As per claims 1, 15, 20, 23, 26, 31, 32, 34, 37, 41, 42, 49 & 58 O'Rourke disclosed a network proxy caching device (col.1, lines 27-31) to operate within a defined cache hierarchy on a network, the caching device comprising: a cache to store content from an origin server on the network; an application to receive a request for content from a client via the network, and to forward the request on the network based on a set of forwarding rules in the event of a cache miss (col.5, lines 43-56); a user interface to enable a user to specify and modify the set of forwarding rules (col.2, lines 23-33 & col.2, lines 51-67); a rule encoder to encode into a uniform syntax forwarding rules specified by the user (col.2, lines 23-57); a rules database to store the encoded forwarding rules (col.4, lines 10-22); a rule evaluator to evaluate the set of forwarding rules sequentially in response to the cache miss, to identify a rule in the set of forwarding rules which applies to the request, by identifying a correspondence between a variable in the request and a variable in the rule, the rule specifying a host within the cache hierarchy as a forwarding destination for the request; and a rule engine to determine an availability of the host and to select the host as said forwarding destination for the request if the host is available, the rule engine further to indicate the host to the application layer if the host is available, to cause the application layer to attempt to establish a connection with the host, such that the application layer forwards the request to the host upon successfully establishing the connection (col.8, lines 5-23, lines 51-67, col.9 & col.10, lines 1-4) wherein if the application layer is unable to forward the request according to the rule, the rule evaluator resumes evaluating the set of forwarding rules to identify another rule corresponding to the request (col.8, lines 5-23). However

O'Rourke did not explicitly disclose wherein the host is available if the host responds to a connection attempt within a timeout period. In the same filed of endeavor Guenthner disclosed wherein the host is available if the host responds to a connection attempt within a timeout period (col.5, lines 44-59).

It would have been obvious to one in the ordinary skill in the art the time the invention was made to have incorporated a timeout period policy as disclosed by Guenthner in the rules engine of the caching device as disclosed by O'Rourke in order to make the caching device more resilient resulting in robust connectivity with available servers providing information to the caching device.

6. As per claims 2, 16, 40 & 51 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 1, wherein the user may specify one or more of the forwarding rules to indicate a manner of forwarding the request within the forwarding hierarchy (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

7. As per claims 3, 17, 24, 35 & 52 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 2, wherein the forwarding hierarchy is a cache hierarchy (col.5, lines 43-56).

8. As per claims 4, 18, 19, 25 & 36 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 3, further comprising a cache to store content requestable by a client on the network, wherein the request processing unit forwards the request only in the event

of a cache miss, wherein the request is a request for content on the network ((col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

9. As per claims 6, 21, 27 & 28 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed an intermediary network node as recited in claim 26, wherein the rule evaluator identifies the rule, which applies to the request by determining that a condition in the rule is satisfied ((col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

10. As per claims 39 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a method as recited in claim 37, further comprising, if said attempting to establish the connection is unsuccessful: determining whether a second available host is indicated in the rule, and if so, attempting to establish a connection to the second available host; and forwarding the request to the second available host (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

11. As per claims 8, 33, 29 & 53 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 1, wherein said rule comprises a plurality of destinations, and wherein the rule engine selects a destination from among the plurality of destinations as a forwarding destination for the request, based on at least one delivery factor included in the rule ((col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

12. As per claim 9 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 8, wherein the at least one delivery factor comprises a specified distribution method for the request (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

13. As per claim 10 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 8, wherein the at least one delivery factor comprises an indication of a current load on at least one of the destinations (col.423-33).

14. As per claim 11 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 8, wherein the at least one delivery factor comprises a weighting of the plurality of destinations indicating a preferred distribution of forwarding requests between the plurality of destinations (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

15. As per claims 12, 13, 14, 16, 22, 30 & 43 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a device as recited in claim 49, wherein the user interface is further to enable the user to modify the set of forwarding rules, to specify a sequence in which the rules of the set of forwarding rules are evaluated, to selectively enable or disable a default forwarding rule (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

16. As per claims 44, 46, 47 & 48 O'Rourke-Guenthner disclosed a method as recited in claim 34, further comprising, prior to said forwarding the request: acquiring information about the forwarding destination, the information being indicative of a

responsiveness of the forwarding destination; computing a timeout period based on the information indicative of the responsiveness of the following destination; and using the computed timeout period, in the request, in attempting to establish a connection with the forwarding destination (col.4, lines 10-22 & col.8, lines 5-23).

### ***Response to Arguments***

17. Applicant's arguments with respect to amended claims 1-4, 6, 8-19, 21-37, 39-49, 51, 52, 57 and 58 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ASGHAR BILGRAMI whose telephone number is (571)272-3907. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan J. Flynn can be reached on 571-272-1915. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Art Unit: 2154

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/A. B./

Examiner, Art Unit 2143

/Nathan J. Flynn/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2154